What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

(i) defining, in configuration data of a computer system, a business process in terms of what activities the business process comprises; and

(ii) defining, in the configuration data, a behavior of each activity of the business process with respect to a business object acted on by the business activity, for a plurality of process control elements including a status element, a user interface element, a plausibility check element, a release element, and an authorization element.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising performing an activity of the business process in accordance with a corresponding defined behavior.

3. A system comprising:

a processor;

a memory coupled to the processor and storing instructions executable by the processor to configure business application software, the instructions implementing a method including:

presenting an option to define a business process in terms of what activities the business process comprises;

based on user input, setting values in configuration data corresponding to a defined process;

presenting an option to define a behavior of each activity of the business process with respect to a business object for each of a plurality of process control elements including a status element, a user interface element, a plausibility check element, a release element, and an authorization element; and

based on user input, setting values in the configuration data corresponding to a defined behavior.

4. The system of claim 3, the method further comprising performing the business process or an activity thereof in accordance with the configuration data.

5. The system of claim 3, the method further comprising associating respective configuration values with retrieval parameters.

5   6. The system of claim 5, the method further comprising reading configuration values based on the retrieval parameters, and controlling a behavior of the business process or an activity thereof based on the configuration values.

7. A machine-readable medium storing computer-executable instructions to perform a

10   method comprising:

presenting an option to define a business process in terms of what activities the business process comprises;

based on user input, setting values in configuration data corresponding to a defined process;

15   presenting an option to define a behavior of each activity of the business process with respect to a business object for each of a plurality of process control elements including a status element, a user interface element, a plausibility check element, a release element, and an authorization element; and

based on user input, setting values in the configuration data corresponding to a

20   defined behavior.

8. The machine-readable medium of claim 7, the method further comprising associating respective configuration values with retrieval parameters.

25   9. A method comprising:

reading configuration data to determine a behavior of a business activity with respect to a business object, wherein the behavior is defined in the configuration data in accordance with a plurality of process control elements including a status element, a user interface element, a plausibility check element, a release element, and an authorization

30   element; and

performing the business activity in accordance with the configuration data.

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10. The method of claim 9, wherein values in the configuration data corresponding to the business activity are read based on a retrieval parameter corresponding to a process control area of the business activity.

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11. The method of claim 9, wherein the status element relates to a stage of a business process that includes the business activity.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein the user interface element relates to at least one of

10   an appearance and operability of a user interface for handling the business object.

13. The method of claim 9, wherein the plausibility check element relates to plausibility checks on data relating to the business object.

15   14. The method of claim 9, wherein the release element relates to an approval for the business object to be acted on by a subsequent activity.

15. The method of claim 9, wherein the authorization element relates to relates an authorization to act on the business object.

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